

ABSTRACT

5           A method of image compression includes significance switching of DCT  
coefficients in block-based embedded DCT procedures. Bitwise digitized DCT  
coefficients are passed through successive significance sweeps of the whole  
image from the most significant down to the least significant coefficient bit  
planes. With each new sweep, newly significant coefficients may appear  
10       within a block, and block-masking is used to transmit the addresses of those  
newly significant coefficients. An off-mask may also be used. The invention  
further relates to a hardware or software-based image encoder.

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